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Autobiography of an Embryo Engineer

EDWARD FUNG, '26

I was born in 1901, in a place called the Valley of the Moon, better known to the world as Honolulu, Hawaii. Here I have lived since a child. The earliest experience I remember was that I dragged a hoe one morning to a sunny place, where grew rose bushes, some of them being the sweet La France, Rose of Alexandria and the gorgeous American Beauty. Here I sat wishing for some one to come and play with me.

In this valley I led the earlier part of my life, never troubling myself about the morrow. Then, whether the valley changed or whether I changed, I do not exactly know. I did not sit around, but amused myself by making miniature bridges and tunnels in the earth.

As I grew up mother taught me things such as any ordinary child is taught. I was anxious to know and learn more. She told me that I would follow that which I did in miniature now, in larger scale. Even though I loved my beautiful valley, I had a longing to go to other lands, which mother told me of.

At seven years of age I attended school for the first time. Times began to change. I no longer made mud bridges and tunnels, but went out with mother to feed the cows and chickens. We got up and ate breakfast by lamplight. Father went off to work in town long before the lazy sun rose.

For four years I went to school and helped at home. Nothing seemed to have changed much during these years. At the end of the fourth year I graduated and was transferred to a school down town. Life was now different. For the first time in my history I had to brush my hair and put on shoes and stockings. All these modern conveniences, as I now think of them, were physical torture for a while, but I soon learned to like them.

The next four years of life were still harder. Father could not work because of heart trouble. Mother and I earned all the expenses by picking algaroba beans on the dairy farm. Mother worked all day and I helped after school hours. Together we earned eighty cents and I was entitled to a nickel every day for car fare.

At the age of fifteen I attended high school. Finding it necessary to make my own way, I left home and earned my room and board with a Mrs. Cooke, who was quite well-to-do and generous. I stayed with her for four years. During the years in high school I was a member of the society of the "all-around rough necks," a bunch of youngsters who spent the nights in deep-sea fishing. Thus it was I learned to like the sea. For three years I was a student in the day and a deep-sea

fisherman at night. At the same time, I never forgot to render my full service for Mrs. Cooke.

One morning in the spring of 1919 I went back to the valley from which place my parents had moved long ago. New people had come into the valley. There, walking in the place where I once played, I saw a human being like myself but of the gentler sex. She was beautiful beyond doubt and she was six years my senior. She became my companion and I crowned her my queen. Thus it was love entered my heart. She was shy and bashful, and she so captivated me that I could hardly turn my eyes from her face.

Then came the day she disappeared. I had loved her so passionately, I could not believe it was true. Many days later I learned that she had married, and had not given me any consideration, whom as a husband she was never to have the privilege of enjoying. I forgot her immediately, and all that I held sacred of her before was now cast into the fire. She had made it possible for me to leave the islands. There, on the other side of the ocean, I could become what I would like to be.

Full permission was given me by my parents to leave home for the Mainland. On the 24th of July, on board the S. S. Lurline, I took a last look at the beautiful sunshine land from whose soil I was to stay away for many years. Seven days later I arrived in California, after a very delightful and enjoyable trip across the Pacific Ocean.

I put myself to work at once for six months, after which time I played the role of a tourist and traveled in the Western states from the border of Canada to Mexico. In this trip I visited several hundred towns and cities and never spent a nickel foolishly. I roamed, sought and saw what I wanted. I have been where life was joyous and where losses outbalanced gains. I have talked with the best of ladies and followed the wildest "janes." I have gone through hell with the rottenest, but I have always come out clean. I have walked through the house of shame, played games from low to high and sat in the House of my own God. In the winter I came back to San Francisco as a gentleman, penniless, friendless, cold and hungry, but not homesick.

Three months later I came to Findlay, Ohio, and made it my home town. I worked there for three years before I came to Columbus. I am now preparing to make in large scale what I once made in miniature in the Valley of the Moon.